

**Senate File 2136 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 2136  
BY JOCHUM

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to the establishment of a 21st century school  
2 system task force.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1     Section 1.  DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — 21st CENTURY SCHOOL  
2 SYSTEM TASK FORCE.

3     1.  The department of education shall convene a task force  
4 to study and plan for the creation of a 21st century school  
5 system.

6     2.  The task force shall consist of the following members  
7 who, except as provided in paragraph "e", shall be appointed by  
8 the director of the department of education:

9     a.  Six parents or guardians of school-age children.  Two  
10 of the parents or guardians appointed shall each have a child  
11 enrolled in a rural school district, two of the parents or  
12 guardians appointed shall each have a child enrolled in a  
13 suburban school district, and two of the parents or guardians  
14 appointed shall each have a child enrolled in an urban school  
15 district.

16    b.  Three superintendents of school districts, one of whom  
17 shall be employed by a rural school district, one of whom shall  
18 be employed by a suburban school district, and one of whom  
19 shall be employed by an urban school district.

20    c.  Three school board members, one of whom shall be  
21 elected as a member of the board of directors of a rural school  
22 district, one of whom shall be elected as a member of the board  
23 of directors of a suburban school district, and one of whom  
24 shall be elected as a member of the board of directors of an  
25 urban school district.

26    d.  Four business leaders, two of whom shall represent small  
27 businesses and two of whom shall represent large businesses.

28    e.  The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint  
29 appropriations subcommittee on education.

30    3.  The task force shall study all of the following:

31    a.  Changing the school calendar, including but not limited  
32 to the length of the school year and the feasibility of moving  
33 to a statewide year around school calendar.  The task force  
34 shall review research regarding school calendars utilized in  
35 other states and countries.

b. Changing the length of the school day to accommodate more teacher preparation time as well as more instructional time for students, giving due consideration to making the school calendar family-friendly and parent work hours and school hours more compatible.

6 c. Beginning the kindergarten through grade eight  
7 instructional day before the high school instructional day.

8 d. Increasing the amount of instructional time for students  
9 who are not at grade level in reading, writing, mathematics,  
10 and grammar skills, in order to allow these students to  
11 advance successfully to the next grade level and avoid social  
12 promotion.

13 e. Increasing the minimal requirements for graduation from  
14 high school.

15 f. Whether the Iowa core curriculum is rigorous, supports  
16 best practices, and meets student needs for success as a  
17 citizen and in the global economy.

18 g. The merits of regional high school academies to meet the  
19 academic needs of students.

4. The task force shall not take into consideration costs, transportation, or athletics when making recommendations relating to student achievement and citizenship, though such barriers shall be studied to form separate recommendations for measures to avoid or manage these barriers.

25       5. The task force shall submit its findings and  
26 recommendations in a report to the general assembly and the  
27 governor by November 15, 2010.

28 EXPLANATION

29       This bill directs the department of education to convene a  
30 task force to study and plan for the creation of a 21st century  
31 school system.

32 The task force shall consist of parents and guardians,  
33 school district superintendents, school board members from  
34 rural, suburban, and urban school districts, business leaders  
35 representing small and large businesses, and the chairpersons

1 and ranking members of the joint appropriations subcommittee  
2 on education.

3     The task force shall study changing the school calendar,  
4 length of the school year, and the feasibility of moving to  
5 a statewide year around school calendar; changing the length  
6 of the school day to accommodate more teacher preparation time  
7 and instructional time for students, giving due consideration  
8 to making the school calendar family-friendly and parent  
9 work hours and school hours more compatible; beginning the  
10 K-8 instructional day before high school starts; additional  
11 instructional time for students who are not at grade level  
12 to allow these students to advance successfully to the next  
13 grade level and avoid social promotion; increasing the minimal  
14 requirements for graduation from high school; whether the Iowa  
15 core curriculum is rigorous, supports best practices, and  
16 meets student needs for success as a citizen and in the global  
17 economy; and the merits of regional high school academies to  
18 meet the academic needs of students.

19     The task force shall not take into consideration costs,  
20 transportation, or athletics when making recommendations  
21 relating to student achievement and citizenship, though such  
22 barriers shall be studied to form separate recommendations for  
23 measures to avoid or manage these barriers.

24     The task force shall submit its findings and recommendations  
25 in a report to the general assembly and the governor by  
26 November 15, 2010.